Set your mouse free!

Some folks (who shall remain nameless) tend to hold on to their mice, trackballs or other input devices for dear life. It is a cognitive response for us to produce an action to get a reaction. At a traffic stoplight we rev the engine or hold tighter onto the steering wheel in hopes that the light will turn green faster. The same is true with our computers. If a window on the computer is slow to open, we tend to squeeze the mouse or click more than is needed (once) to hurry the computer. It doesn't work for green lights and it doesn't work for computers. RELAX!!!

Holding on to any object for long periods of time can result in decreased oxygen delivery to your muscles. It may result in fatigue and soreness and can lead to injury. The repetitive clicking of an input device can lead to the overuse of tendons. How much is too much? If your hand/arms/shoulders get stiff and fatigued, it is "too much". Micro stretch breaks can help your body increase overall circulation and decrease fatigue.

Ergonomics is the science that helps you work smarter not harder. You can use an alternative input device that doesn't require you to hold onto a mouse or trackball. An example of these types of devices include the touch pad and the roller mouse:

So, the next time you are waiting for an application to appear on your computer screen, a window to pop open, a program to compile…. Set your mouse (or other input device) free!

Use that time to stretch, take a deep breath, and relax.

Resources:
Examples of easy stretches:
Stretch Breaks – University of Virginia
Stretch Breaks – University of California Berkeley
LANL Biofeedback and Relaxation Program
http://int.lanl.gov/worklife/health/eap/eap_biofeedback.shtml